



Tribal businesses receive Native American VAF awards

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A body care products company, a jeweler and a project management firm are just some of the Native American entrepreneurs benefitting from awards from the latest Native American Venture Acceleration Fund (NAVAF).

Six Northern New Mexico Native American–owned and –operated businesses have been selected to receive a total of \$60,000 in the current round of NAVAF awards. The fund was created to help the recipients create jobs, increase their revenue base and diversify the area economy.

“These investments create jobs for pueblo-owned businesses and help strengthen the area’s economy,” says Kathy Keith, director of the Lab’s Community Partnerships Office.

This year’s selected recipients are:

- Aguilar Consulting, San Ildefonso Pueblo: to purchase CAD software and support website development.
- Jacqueline Gala Jewelry, Taos Pueblo: to purchase equipment and develop a website to boost online sales.
- Bison Star Naturals, Taos Pueblo: to purchase supplies needed to advance existing lotion line and launch a new liquid soap line.
- Butterfly Artist Market, Pojoaque Pueblo: to establish the Pojoaque Butterfly Artist Market to increase exposure and generate revenue for artisans from throughout the region.
- PM Waterlilly, Taos Pueblo: to produce garments and accessories in order to create an affordable Native ready-to-wear women’s clothing line.
- Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council (ENIPC): to reestablish the Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council Arts and Craft Show.

To date, more than \$390,000 has been invested in the regional economy through the Native American Venture Acceleration Fund. The fund is managed by the Regional Development Corporation as part of its work assisting Northern New Mexico communities and small businesses with economic development activities, furthering job creation in the region.

“Native American entrepreneurs are building new companies and creating new jobs. We’re happy the Native American Venture Acceleration Fund can play a role in supporting these successes,” said Val Alonzo, executive director of the RDC.

In addition to the financial support, grant recipients will also be provided with technical assistance from the RDC and other organizations.

More information about the Native American Venture Acceleration Fund is available from [Vangie Trujillo](#) of the Lab's Community Partnerships Office or [Val Alonzo](#) of the Regional Development Corporation.

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